

Almshouse NEAR SOUTH RIVERS
Londontown, Anne Arundel County
Maryland

HAES No. MD-29

HAES
MD.

2- SORT.V

3-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Maryland

Historic American Buildings Survey
John H. Scarff, District Officer
1012 Keyser Building, Baltimore, Maryland

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ALMSHOUSE
Londontown, Anne Arundel County, Maryland
NEAR SOUTH RIVER.

Owner: Sec. of Public Works of Anne Arundel County

Date: c.1747

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Unknown

Present Condition: Fair

Materials: Stone foundation, brick superstructure

Other Records: Not known

Additional Data: Exterior in good condition and original except for sash and possibly cornice. Side porch new, west porch gone. All exterior doors original except north. All interior woodwork modern. Original plan indeterminate, but perhaps large central room, full depth of buildings, transverse corridors and four corner rooms.

DATA NOT COMPILED AND NOT GUARANTEED
BY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

AW

8/30/37

London Town Publik House
Anne Arundell Co.

MD. 29

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Right 0.4 mi. to #468. Left 1 mi. to #214.
Left 0.4 mi. to #253. Right 0.8 mi. to
London Town Road, 1.3 mi. to:

**9. LONDON TOWN PUBLIK HOUSE
AND GARDENS.** Towering majestically
above the steep banks of the South River,
this handsome brick building is the only
structure remaining in the once-thriving

port of London Town. It is now a Registered
Historic Landmark. The town, declared a
Port of Entry in 1683, was located on the
original land grant of 1651 to Colonel
William Burgess, on the only land route from
Norfolk to Philadelphia. The Publik House,
built in 1744-50, was used by travelers await-
ing the ferry, and at one time served as the
town hall and court house of the ancient
port. Owned by Anne Arundel County, it is
being restored to its original magnificence
under the London Town Publik House Com-
mission. A log tobacco barn built about 1720
has been reassembled on the grounds. The
surrounding 10½ acres are being developed
into a series of gardens indigenous to the
natural terrain: a spring walk, winter
garden, azalea glade, camellia and rhododen-
dron bays. Extensive wildflower walks will
aid in educational programs for children.
Other plantings will be designed to attract
birds for study by ornithologists. Commis-
sion Chairman, Mrs. Marshall H. Nelker;
Garden Chairman, Mrs. Thomas H. Morton.

**LONDON TOWN
PUBLIK HOUSE**



M. E. Warren

A National Historic Landmark
overlooking
South River
at
Edgewater, Maryland

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LONDON TOWN PUBLIK HOUSE, c. 1744-50, a handsome, two-story brick house, majestically situated on an elevation overlooking the broad expanses of the South River, just a few miles south of Annapolis, is the only remaining building of a once-flourishing town.

Although the exact date of the establishment of LONDON TOWN is uncertain, official records reveal that it was built on land deeded by Lord Baltimore to Col. William Burgess in 1651.

Rapid growth of the tiny 17th-c. shipping and tobacco port was noted by the Provincial Assembly in 1683 with its designation of LONDON TOWN as a port of entry. Tall-masted sailing ships brought cargoes of European and East India goods to the harbor, exporting Maryland's much-sought commodity, tobacco, for foreign markets.

THE Subscriber, in LONDON TOWN on South River, has erected a Rope Walk, and makes all sorts of Cable, Cordage, and Rigging for Ships, and other Vessels, as also Sail Cloth, Batts, Lanes, and other Line, Hoops, and other Ware, and White Rope for Country Uses. He is provided with an excellent Warehouse from London, well filled in all Parts of the Year. Any Gentlemen who may have occasion to purchase, may be served at said Rope Walk, or at Mr. Towns End, in the County of Anne Arundel, and fully depend on having what is sent, and being great Pains being taken to bring it to the greatest Perfection.

There is now ready made all Sorts of Cordage and Rigging, and is London Town and elsewhere, to be sold by

STEWART WALKER, Junr.

Maryland Gazette, May 11, 1748

Travellers from Philadelphia and Williamsburg crossed South River at the town of LONDON by way of a ferry. Thomas Jefferson makes mention of paying the ferry man at LONDON in 1775.

The stately structure, now known as the Publik House, is thought to have been built by William Brown, and served as an Inn.

Among other known owners and probable occupants of LONDON TOWN PUBLIK HOUSE was John Hoskins Stone, eighth Governor of Maryland

(1794-97). The last private owner, James Larimore, sold the property to Anne Arundel County in 1828. From that time till 1965, it served as the County Almshouse.

The LONDON TOWN PUBLIK HOUSE COMMISSION is planning and directing the extensive restoration currently in progress.



Architecturally significant features of the PUBLIK HOUSE include the use of oversize brick such as those found in Paca and other notable Annapolis landmarks, laid in all-header pattern; the unique, cross-shaped floor plan with four rooms on each floor divided by a great hall; the large, arched interior doorways; use of transoms over some of the first-floor interior doorways and raised-floor rooms. All exterior doors, hardware, woodwork and most of the glass are original. Noteworthy also are the numerous fireplaces throughout the house.

Original paint colors, revealed by archaeological research, have been used.



This log tobacco barn, constructed in 1720, and formerly on the Dorsey family plantation, "Hockley-in-the-Hole," has been donated by the A. S. Abell Co. of Baltimore for use as a tobacco industry exhibit center.

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LONDON TOWN GARDENS



The adjoining eight acres of magnificent undulating woodland terrain, bounded by Almshouse Creek and South River, are being developed into a series of natural woodland gardens, with plants indigenous to the locale, designed to embellish the natural landscape and create an oasis of peace and beauty. A spring walk, azalea glade, winter garden, overlook garden, camellia, rhododendron and holly bays are to be planted. Extensive wildflower walks for the enjoyment and education of children and plantings to attract birds for study by ornithological groups are planned.

Garden clubs in the area are lending their support not only with donating the funds to carry out this worthwhile plan, but with manned labor in planting the material. It is hoped in the future to have a botanical nursery attached to the gardens so that visitors may purchase specimens of the plants on exhibit in the gardens.

Memorial contributions are invited.

Please specify if for House or
Garden Fund



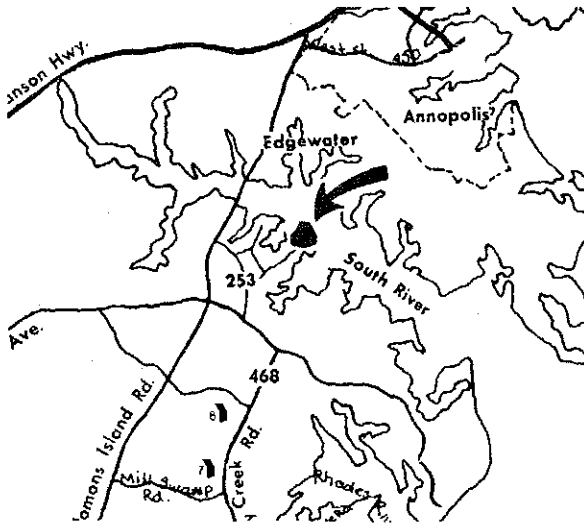
From time to time, there are exhibits displayed in the Visitor Center. We cordially invite you to return often to LONDON TOWN to see crafts and other exhibits relevant to the Chesapeake Bay and bygone years when LONDON TOWN was a vibrant, thriving seaport.

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**LONDON TOWN** is located:

By Land: South on Maryland Rt. 2 from Annapolis to Edgewater; turn left at traffic light at Lee Airport, proceed on Rt. 253 (Mayo Rd.) to intersection with LONDON TOWN Road (1 + miles), turn left and continue to end of road, again turning left into LONDON TOWN. Ample parking provided

By Water: If you're sailing or motor-cruising, you'll find it a delightful trip up South River from Chesapeake Bay - - about 2 miles to the John O. Crandall Pier. All size boats can be accommodated and there is no dockage fee.

Visiting Hours: Open daily,
10 A.M. to 4 P.M.

Admission: Adults, \$1.00
children under 12, \$.50
children under 6, free.

The idyllic, waterside setting of LONDON TOWN presents a charming atmosphere to clubs and other groups for meetings, receptions, etc. Available for nominal fee. Catering services can be arranged.

For further information, write or phone:

LONDON TOWN PUBLIK HOUSE
Rt. 3, Box 300, Edgewater, Maryland 21037
Phone: 301-956-2737

London Town Publik House

Rt. 3, Box 300, Edgewater, Maryland 21037

A Registered National Historic Landmark

(for Address)

ADDENDUM TO:
ALMSHOUSE AT LONDON TOWN
(Old Town Hall)
(London Town Publik House)
London Town Road
South River vicinity
Anne Arundel County
Maryland

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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001